

What is claimed is:

1. A telecommunications network comprising:
an originating system connected to a terminating system via at least one other network
element; and

5 a network element equipped with a processor for transmitting a message to the
terminating system indicating that a transmission was received over an insecure link.

2. The telecommunications network of claim 1 further comprising the terminating
system alerting a called station of the insecure nature of the transmission upon receipt of the
insecure message.

10 3. A telecommunications network of claim 1 further comprising the originating
system alerting a calling party of the insecure link.

4. A method for providing secure transmissions in a telecommunications network
comprising the steps of:

15 establishing a route from a sender to a recipient;
determining whether at least a portion of the route includes an insecure link; and
providing an alert of the insecure nature of the transmission upon the determination
that the route includes an insecure link.

5. The method of claim 4 further comprising the step of:
completing a call after the alert has been provided.

6. The method of claim 4 wherein providing an alert includes issuing a distinctive
ring at the recipient's station.

7. The method of claim 4 wherein providing an alert includes issuing a message on an
identification display.

8. The method of claim 4 further comprising the sender receiving an insecure link
25 warning prior to connection to the recipient.

9. The method of claim 4 wherein the alert is provided to the sender.

10. The method of claim 4 wherein providing an alert includes providing an audible
voice message.

11. The method of claim 4 wherein providing an alert includes using an audible tone.

30 12. The method of claims 10 or 11 wherein providing an alert includes providing a
periodic alert.

13. The method of claim 4 further comprising:
issuing an alert when a previously secure route becomes insecure.

CS
concl, 14. The method of claim 4 wherein providing an alert includes a query screen on a personal computer.

15. A method for processing a request for a telecommunications connection comprising the steps of:

5 receiving a request to establish a portion of a route between parties, the request including a security protocol;

determining whether the route would include an insecure link; and

upon a determination that an insecure link exists, sending a security alert message.

10 16. The method of claim 15 further comprising establishing a portion of a route without sending a security alert message.

17. The method of claim 15 further comprising sending a security status request.

18. A telecommunications system comprising:

means for interconnecting a caller to a called party; and

means for alerting the caller or called party when a call path is established using at

15 least one insecure link.

19. The telecommunications system of claim 18 wherein the call path traverses a packet data network.

20. The telecommunications system of claim 18 further comprising means for determining whether an insecure link has been traversed.

20 21. The telecommunications system of claim 18 further comprising means for issuing insecure link alert signals to other elements in a telecommunications network.

22. The telecommunications system of claim 18 further comprising means for the caller and called party to hear insecure warning signals throughout the call.

25 23. The telecommunications system of claim 18 wherein the call path traverses a cell network.

24. The telecommunications system of claim 18 wherein the means for alerting is subject to parameters established for a particular subscriber.